

10 June 2022

P.O. Box 1890
TOOWONG QLD 4066

The Hon Leeanne Enoch MP
Minister for Communities and Housing
By email: communitiesandhousing@ministerial.qld.gov.au

**URGENT: Intervention requested to block eviction
(QCAT 693/22 and APL116/22)**

Dear Minister Enoch,

I write to follow up on my letter of 10 May 2022. You will recall that I made an impassioned plea for you to take action to stop the enforcement of a Warrant of Possession which would see me evicted from my public housing apartment into likely homelessness. I note that no response has been received to my first letter so far, nor have you taken any action to stop the eviction.

I take the opportunity to renew my request, as the risk of homelessness for me is still a very real possibility, despite your claim on air this morning that the Department does not evict people into homelessness. If you really do want these words to have some substance, you will stop my eviction to ensure their integrity. Failure to intervene will just make these statements ring hollow.

I am advised that many letters of support have been sent to your office about my situation. It is disappointing that you have so far chosen not to take any action.

As you are no doubt aware, my application to stay the decision of QCAT was refused on 1 June, and an order was made to issue a new Warrant of Possession to replace the previous one which expired on 24 May. The new Warrant became effective on 6 June and claims to be valid until 20 June. I have been advised by both the Fortitude Valley Customer Service Centre and the Queensland Police that this Warrant is to be executed at 10am on Friday 17 June. So, there is still time for you to take action and stop my eviction from proceeding.

My case was made public last Monday morning (6 June) through an interview with Rebecca Levingston on ABC Radio Brisbane. My State MP Michael Berkman was also interviewed. As you know, Michael has been very supportive of my case and continues to lobby the Government to pull its socks up on the issue of housing, especially public housing. The segment received a lot of public attention and supportive comment.

I listened to your interview on ABC Radio this morning and note your claim that you are “bound by the QCAT decision”, which is not true. QCAT merely made a decision in favour of the Department to issue a Warrant of Possession. You are not “bound” by that decision and you are not obligated to enforce the Warrant. In fact, it is your prerogative whether or not to enforce the Warrant, and I again reiterate the requests of the many other people who have written to you allow the Warrant to expire.

On Wednesday morning (8 June), I met with two officers from the Fortitude Valley Service Centre and a support worker from Communitify. At this meeting, I made application for a referral to the Park Hotel, which I understand is a temporary accommodation provider, and also to Brisbane Housing Company. There is no guarantee that a vacancy exists at either of these, so despite the expedition of my referral, I may still become homeless on 17 June if no place is found for me before then.

There is a growing sentiment in the community that what your Department is doing to me is manifestly unfair and should be challenged. If you choose not to take action to prevent my eviction, it will be remembered as a failure to protect vulnerable members of the community such as myself.

The unexpected success of the Greens at the recent Federal election should be a big wake-up call to your Department and the Queensland Government that a large section of the community is very concerned about the current housing crisis. Affordable housing (including more investment in public housing) is a major policy of the Greens, and it appears this resonated with many voters last month. The actions of your Department in evicting a disabled pensioner into probable homelessness (and your decision so far not to intervene) highlight the disconnect between the Government and reality on the ground. It's not a good look and will not wash with the voting public.

But there is some good news. It's not too late to step in and avoid a public relations crisis. I know you can do it. The public wants you to do it. It's within your power to do it. So please, **do it now - stop my eviction!**

Regards,

David Barker